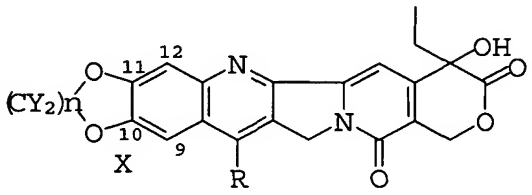
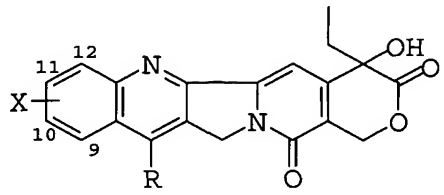
WHAT IS CLAIMED AS NEW AND DESIRED TO BE SECURED BY LETTERS PATENT OF THE UNITED STATES IS:

1. A method for the preparation of 7-substituted camptothecin compounds of formula (I) or (II):



I



II

where

X is H, NH_2, H, F, Cl, Br, O-C_{1-6} alkyl, S-C_{1-6} alkyl, NH-C_{1-6} alkyl, N(C_{1-6} alkyl)$_2$, or C_{1-8} alkyl,

or X is -Z-$(CH_2)_a$-N-(C_{1-6} alkyl)$_2$ wherein Z is selected from the group consisting of O, NH and S, and a is an integer of 2 or 3,

or X is -$CH_2NR^2R^3$, where (a) R^2 and R^3 are, independently, hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl-C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} COR^4 where R^4 is hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl-C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl, or (b) R^2 and R^3 taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a saturated 3-7 membered heterocyclic ring which may contain a O, S or NR^5 group, where R^5 is hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, alkyl, aryl, aryl substituted with one or more groups selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} alkyl, amino, C_{1-6} alkylamino, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl C_{1-6} alkyl C_{1-6} alkoxy, aryl, and aryl substituted with one or more C_{1-6} alkyl, or C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl groups;

R is C_{1-30} alkyl, substituted C_{1-30} alkyl, C_{1-30} alkenyl, substituted C_{1-30} alkenyl, C_{1-30} alkynyl, substituted , C_{1-30} alkynyl, C_{3-30} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-30} cycloalkyl, C_{6-18} aryl,

substituted C_{6-18} aryl, C_{6-18} aryalkyl, $(C_{1-30}$ alkyl$)_3$ silyl or $(C_{1-30}$ alkyl$)_3$ silyl C_{1-30} alkyl,

Y is independently H or F,

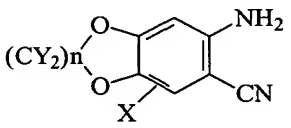
and

n is an integer of 1 or 2,

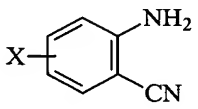
and salts thereof

comprising:

i) reacting an ortho amino cyano aromatic compound of formula (III) or (IV)



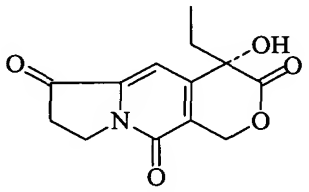
III



IV

with an organometallic reagent R -M and

ii) condensing a resulting product with a 20(S)tricyclic ketone of formula (VII)



VII

2. The method of claim 1, wherein R-M is selected from the group consisting of cyclohexylmagnesium halide, allyl magnesium halide, vinyl magnesium halide, ethyl magnesium halide, 4-fluorophenylmagnesium halide, isopropenyl magnesium halide, isopropyl magnesium halide, methyl magnesium halide, ethynyl magnesium halide, cyclopentyl magnesium halide, phenyl magnesium halide, benzyl magnesium halide, propyl magnesium halide, 1-propynyl magnesium halide, *p*-tolyl magnesium halide, *o*-tolyl magnesium halide, 1-trimethylsilymethyl magnesium halide, hexyl magnesium halide, 2-thiophenyl magnesium halide, 4-dimethylaminophenyl magnesium halide, 4-chloro 1-butenyl

2-magnesium halide, *p*-methoxylbenzyl magnesium halide, methoxymethyl magnesiumhalide, and *p*-chloro phenylmagnesium halide, *n*-butyl magnesium halide, *s*-butyl magnesium halide, *t*-butyl magnesium halide and p-trifluoromethylphenylmagnesium halide.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is *n*-butyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *n*-butyl.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is benzyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is benzyl.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is *p*-tolyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *p*-tolyl.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is 4-fluorophenyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is 4-fluorophenyl.

7. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is *p*-chlorophenyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *p*-chlorophenyl.

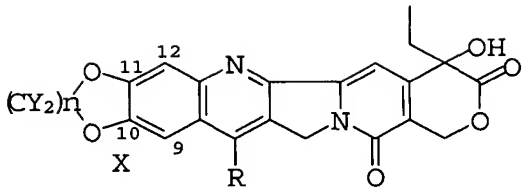
8. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (III), R-M is *p*-trifluoromethylphenyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *p*-trifluoromethylphenyl.

9. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (IV), R-M is *n*-butyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *n*-butyl.

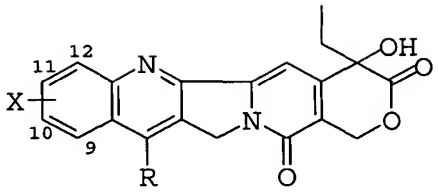
10. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (IV), R-M is *s*-butyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *s*-butyl.

11. The method of claim 2, wherein said ortho amino cyano aromatic compound is a compound of formula (IV), R-M is *t*-butyl magnesium halide, and R^7 is *t*-butyl.

12. A 7-substituted camptothecin compound of formula (I) or (II):



I



II

wherein

X is H, NH_2, H, F, Cl, Br, O-C_{1-6} alkyl, S-C_{1-6} alkyl, NH-C_{1-6} alkyl, N(C_{1-6} alkyl)$_2$, or C_{1-8} alkyl,

or X is -Z-$(CH_2)_a$-N-(C_{1-6} alkyl)$_2$ wherein Z is selected from the group consisting of O, NH and S, and a is an integer of 2 or 3,

or X is -$CH_2NR^2R^3$, where (a) R^2 and R^3 are, independently, hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl-C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} COR^4 where R^4 is hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl-C_{1-6} alkyl, C_{2-6} alkenyl, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl, or (b) R^2 and R^3 taken together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a saturated 3-7 membered heterocyclic ring which may contain a O, S or NR^5 group, where R^5 is hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, alkyl, aryl, aryl substituted with one or more groups selected from the group consisting of C_{1-6} alkyl, amino, C_{1-6} alkylamino, C_{1-6} alkoxy, C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl C_{1-6} alkyl C_{1-6} alkoxy, aryl, and aryl substituted with one or more C_{1-6} alkyl, or C_{1-6} alkoxy-C_{1-6} alkyl groups;

R is C_{7-30} alkyl, substituted C_{1-30} alkyl, C_{1-30} alkenyl, substituted C_{1-30} alkenyl, C_{1-30} alkynyl, substituted , C_{1-30} alkynyl, C_{3-30} cycloalkyl, substituted C_{3-30} cycloalkyl, C_{6-18} aryl, substituted C_{6-18} aryl, C_{6-18} aryalkyl, (C_{1-30} alkyl)$_3$ silyl or (C_{1-30} alkyl)$_3$ silyl C_{1-30} alkyl,

Y is independently H or F,

and

n is an integer of 1 or 2,

and salts thereof.

13. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 12, wherein R is selected from the group consisting of cyclohexyl, allyl, vinyl, 4-fluorophenyl, ethynyl, cyclopentyl, phenyl, benzyl, 1-propynyl, *p*-tolyl, *o*-tolyl, 1-trimethylsilymethyl, hexyl, 2-thiophenyl, 4-dimethylaminophenyl, 2-(4-chloro 1-butenyl), *p*-methoxylbenzyl, methoxymethyl, *p*-chloro phenyl, *s*-butyl, *t*-butyl, and p-trifluoromethylphenyl.

14. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is benzyl.

15. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *p*-tolyl.

16. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *p*-fluorophenyl.

17. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *p*-chlorophenyl.

18. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *p*-trifluoromethylphenyl.

19. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *s*-butyl.

20. The 7-substituted camptothecin compound of claim 13, wherein R is *t*-butyl.